

Executive coaching valued more

Published: 21/10/2010 Bangkok Post Business Section

Thai businesses value on-the-job training as the most effective tool to enhance executive performance followed by executive coaching, a survey by the Thailand Coaching Society (TCS) shows.

The study, which questioned 140 executives in April and May, reveals 82.6% of respondents ranked on-the-job training as an effective approach with executive coaching a close second at 82.1% and project assignment coming in at 79.8%.

The least preferred method was online learning with only 49.2% of the votes.

Jean-Francois Cousin, managing director of 1-2-Win Co, said people prefer on-the-job training because they can learn more effectively by doing.

Along the same lines, executive coaching encourages learning by doing and thinking about problems out loud, making it a practice that is gaining momentum in Asia.

Kriengsak Niratpattanasai, founder of The Coach, said the study shows growing interest in executive coaching practices in Thailand.

As for improving executive behaviour, 82% of participants rank one-on-one executive coaching the most effective method, followed by mentoring at 74%.

Another positive sign for executive coaching is that 39% of participants used it for talent development rather than to fix flaws. Research by the Harvard Business Review conducted last year in the US showed 48% of respondents there use it for talent development.

"It's a different picture than 10 years ago, when executive coaching in Thailand was used only as a problem-solving tool and people who were coached usually felt it was a penalty for poor performance," Mr Kriengsak said.

Potchanart Seebungkerd, founder of Jimi The Coach, believes companies now view coaching as a way to strengthen their talents. He said the use of executive coaching in Thailand is following a global trend, although Thailand may lag the United States and Europe by over a decade.

Mr Cousin said there was a big gap in the proportion of coaches in Thailand to the developed world. For instance, in the US, there is one coach per 20,000 people, in Australia, there is one per 7,500, but Thailand has about one per 1 million.

The survey shows 78% of respondents expect executive coaching in Thailand will continue to grow. And 93% would repeat the executive coaching experience.

However, Mr Kriengsak said there were some issues related to executive coaching that users need to know. Typically the practice will not work with clients who are opposed to change. Clients also need to beware of unqualified coaches who lack of credentials and experience.

The survey is the country's first on executive coaching. Some 78% or 110 respondents have been coached.

The TCS was founded in June by four professional executive coaches: Kriengsak Niratpattanasai, Jean-Francois Cousin, Potchanart Seebungkerd and Apiwut Pimolsangsuriya. It aims to be a stage to share knowledge and experience in the executive coaching industry.